



**Belfast**  
City Council

**Equality Action Plan 2021-24**

**UPDATE FOR ACTIONS DELIVERED DURING 2022-23**

We are committed to making sure that our services and information are available to all parts of the community. If you need this information in an alternative format or language, please contact us at:

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## **What is the Equality Action Plan?**

This Equality Action Plan runs from 2021 until 2024, it is a corporate level document which outlines how we will promote equality and diversity in our ambitions to create a city in which people love to live, learn, invest, work and visit. It also contributes to our compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

## **What other documents is the Equality Action Plan linked to?**

1. The Equality Action Plan is developed from some of the information in the **Audit of Inequalities**, which is a systematic approach to identify inequalities, across the nine Section 75 categories (religious belief, political opinion, race, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, people with dependants or without), which are relevant to a public authority's functions.
2. The Equality Action Plan contains some of the key priorities from our Corporate Plan, which will have the biggest impact on inequalities. Our Corporate Plan is a reflection of what people in Belfast have told us they want and the type of leadership they feel the city needs. It takes the priorities of the Belfast Agenda, the Community Plan, and sets out the ways in which the council will deliver these to grow a sustainable, inclusive economy and equitable society. To fulfil our responsibilities, our Corporate Plan not only ensures we deliver the day to day services which the people of Belfast rely upon; we stretch ourselves through a series of strategic priorities to ensure we positively affect the lives of everyone in Belfast

## **How are the actions in the Equality Action Plan categorised?**

Actions are categorised according to the Corporate Plan priority they contribute to. Each action includes a timescale for delivery, a performance indicator and the name of the department responsible for delivery. We will report on these actions annually.

## 1. Growing an inclusive economy

We will work to create an inclusive, resilient economy through creating good, sustainable jobs.

A thriving urban economy is a key foundation to achieving many of the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda. Not only can a successful economy generate the wealth required to grow local businesses, generate jobs and offer routes out of poverty for struggling families, it is also the main source of revenue for the city's public services, programmes and interventions.

Ref No	Actions	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Departmental Responsibility	Update/ Progress 2022-23
1.1	Access to Employment work package - Deliver employment academies in sectors focused on workforce demand (Logistics, Social Care, Child Care, Public Sector), removing barriers to people furthest removed from the labour market to enter into or return to employment and/or advance in employment. (Annual programme)	2021-24	Percentage participating in Employment Academies. Percentage into employment (NB reviewed at key checkpoints within the year as the state of play within the labour market becomes clearer)	Place & Economy	<p>Employment Academies help Belfast residents to get jobs or move up the ladder to a better job. Academies help employers with their recruitment needs and sectors focus on workforce demand for example (Tech; Transport and Logistics; Working with Children; Health and Social Care; Leisure; Construction; Fibre optics etc.). Tailored training is provided for groups of up to 15 people, ranging from one week up to sixteen-week period depending on the sector. Qualifications are provided from Levels 1-5. Barriers are removed for participants attending training (by providing out of pocket expenses such as childcare and travel) and additional language support is provided for those where English is not their first language or where reasonable adjustments are made for people with disabilities. To maximise participation across the city and to promote opportunities, Employment Academies are widely advertised, and strong relationships are built among Section 75 groups and their clients.</p> <p>Since April 2022, 639 people participated in Employment Academies (with an into-employment rate of 78% for those successfully completing) in sectors ranging from logistics, business support, public sector driving, construction, classroom assistants, social care, health care, construction, leisure, fibre optics and childcare/ play work. In addition, 97 people were supported with gaining retrofit qualifications that has enabled the qualifications to be embedded within the skills infrastructure which bring the total participant number to 716.</p> <p>Of the 619 who started an Employment Academy, so far the attrition rate has been 3%, 246 have fully completed and of these 194 have gained job/better job (79% of those completing). 369 are still participating, some on longer-term upskilling programmes which can last up to 18 months. Of those still going through an academy, 170 are already in work and are receiving support, qualifications or licences needed to access a better job. These include Level 3-5 qualifications and broken down as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68 people are undertaking Childcare Upskilling;</li> <li>• 65 are completing Health &amp; Social Care Upskilling; and</li> <li>• 37 are undertaking Classroom Assistant Upskilling at Level 3.</li> </ul>

1.2	Support five training and skills development projects via the European Social Fund (in partnership with TEO), targeting those who are long-term unemployed, younger people not in education, employment or training and people with disabilities.	2021-24	No. of participants achieving positive outcomes	Place & Economy	<p>As part of the Council's efforts to support the long-term unemployed and economically inactive to enter the labour market, the council provided match funding to four European Social Fund (ESF) projects. Programmes help key target groups (long-term unemployed, economically inactive, young people not in education, employment or training, lone parents, and disabled people) to develop their skills and get a job or become self-employed. Belfast's economic inactivity rate sits at 25.8 per cent and the primary reason is disability and sickness (especially among males).</p> <p>Since April 2022 until Dec 2022, these ESF projects supported 2405 people with 912 gaining employment and 239 progressing to education/training.</p>
1.3	Develop a GIS (Geographic Information System) monitoring approach to systematically assist programme development to continue to tackle inequalities in access to the labour market.	2021-24	Effective monitoring mechanism established to better understand inequalities, and the needs of S75 groupings. / Improve quality and quantity of monitoring information to support policy making on Employability and Skills (retrospective measure)	Place & Economy	<p>This has progressed to Employability &amp; Skills (E&amp;S) – in partnership with QUB and UU as well as IPPO – developing a Labour Market Observatory which will bring together information, intelligence and analysis of the labour market within city in terms of demand (job demand, skills gaps etc.), supply (insights into section 75 groups, geospatial deprivation etc.), provision (including 'what works well') and policy.</p>
1.4	Working with partners and stakeholders across the city to put in place an (enterprise framework) action plan which supports long term ambitions to increase the number of business start-ups, including targeting workless residents, females and young people - and any under-represented groups	2021-24	Increase in % participants from under-represented groups on enterprise awareness initiatives. / No. of business starts.	Place & Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1772 individuals were engaged with aim of raising awareness of Entrepreneurship and providing individuals the opportunity to develop innovative business ideas, skills and to engage with real life entrepreneurs.</li> </ul> <p>The ability to do so was assisted through engagement with over 20 external organisations that collaborated as a wider stakeholder grouping to coordinate a collective approach to addressing the issues and challenges in starting and building a business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of the 18-month Pathways to Enterprise Programme that supported 20 economically inactive individuals to overcome barriers to starting a business.</li> </ul> <p>Participants were supported to overcome structural barriers including childcare, travel and finance as well as personal barriers including for example challenges presented by mental health, emotional well-being and addiction issues.</p>

					<p>18 of the 20 participants that were supported to complete a business plan have started trading and of which 16 were Female.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 489 individuals were also supported in developing a business plan through the 'Go For It' programme, that additionally supported the creation of 293 jobs.</li> <li>• Targeting 1<sup>st</sup> year intake of apprenticeship students, 88 young people starting their vocational skills journey including motor vehicle, hairdressing/barbering and painting &amp; decorating were provided with details on potential of self-employment and supports available.</li> <li>• 11 of these students then took opportunity to attend a site visit at BLK BOX to experience at first-hand how vocational skills obtained can lead to creation of an award-winning business.</li> <li>• Delivery of an Inclusive Enterprise Workshop during Global Entrepreneur Week titled Inspire, Inform, Include. Focusing specifically on encouraging people with disabilities into enterprise, 23 Representatives from a variety of organisations were present at the live engagement session, including Belfast City Council, DfC, NIUSE, Mencap, APPG for Inclusive Entrepreneurship, GEN UK and The Mind Tribe UK. Discussions and recommendations from this session will inform future activity.</li> <li>• Through our dedicated female enterprise support 15 women were provided with 1-1 mentoring, peer support, workshops and access to networking opportunities. As a result of the support 10 businesses have started up, 1 participant successfully secured funding through Techstart of £35,000.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to this Belfast City Council also provided funding to enable Women in Business to deliver the International Voices of Leadership Conference, which was about inspiring ambition, leadership, best practice, and about skills and personal development. Over 400 local delegates attended this half day Conference. Speakers included Hillary Clinton, Cherie Blair, Mary McAleese, Sarah Friars, Caroline Feeney, and SistersIN.org.</p>
1.5	Understand the barrier to employment to support employability skills and capacity building programme for disabled people and those from ethnic minority groups.	2021-22	Use insights to inform programme design	Place & Economy	<p>The LMP strategic assessment, carried out in 2021 to establish the Belfast Labour Market Partnership, has been refreshed in 2022 and again identified a number of key groups that were under-represented in the labour market or that faced significant barriers to finding work. These groups include (among others) those with a disability, those living with health issues (including mental health), and ethnic minorities. Likewise, the research identified that there are specific parts of the city where levels of Long-term Unemployment and economic inactivity are more than twice the city average. Government programmes over many years have tried different</p>

					approaches to support these groups. We are now completing the work to explore some new models that are either target group-based and/or location-based in order to support incremental improvements in employment outcomes among the target populations.
1.6	Deliver the Access and Inclusion Programme of capital enhancement projects to encourage engagement with culture, arts, and heritage experiences (subject to funding)	2021-24	Number of small capital enhancement projects delivered	Place & Economy	Four Access and Inclusion projects were supported during 2022/23. These included capital adaptations to cultural premises, open Spaces of accessibility, automated door access within an arts centre and a sensory area in 2 Royal Avenue.
1.7	Develop schemes to support higher participation and representation at cultural events by disabled people such as gig buddies	2021-24	No. of events supported by Gig Buddies	Place & Economy	<p>Support continues for year two of the Gig Buddies scheme. Progress included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of volunteers</li> <li>• Volunteer training</li> <li>• Delivering accessibility training to staff in other venues</li> <li>• Matching participants with 11 volunteers</li> <li>• Collaboration and events with Carousel, a Brighton-based charity focused on championing the work of learning disabled musicians and artists</li> <li>• Collaboration with Creative Tours Belfast for private tours</li> <li>• Range of socials and events held throughout the year (15 socials and festivals and a similar number of gigs).</li> </ul> <p>As part of council's wider programme delivery, we continue to research industry best practice on removing barriers to accessibility at events; setting good example at Council led events e.g., Changing Places facilities, and will endeavour to influence other organisers, via Council channels, to consider accessibility as an integral part of event planning.</p> <p>Research was carried out the Tourism and Events Unit to create a snapshot of accessible tourism in Belfast and best practice elsewhere. The report concluded that Belfast City Council's accessible tourism programme should focus on developing the skills of businesses and their staff to promote inclusivity. Capacity building and training was provided via a suite of resources and blended learning, allowing businesses to choose the breadth and depth of support to suit need and capacity.</p>

1.8	Deliver A City Imagining projects targeting LGBTQ+ groups, ethnic minority and newcomer communities, disabled people, older people, schools and multi-lingual communities	2021-24	No. of participants	Place & Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning of new pilot events with Belfast Pride</li> <li>• New pilot initiatives with Arts Ekta reaching approx. 2,500 participants (Spring Equinox)</li> <li>• Artist Bursaries / Artist in Residence with three artists working specifically with LGBTQ+ groups, ethnic minority, and newcomer communities</li> <li>• Ongoing research regarding LGBTQIA+ visibility in the city's culture</li> <li>• Utilising similar principles to research on LGBTQIA+ visibility; commission research into on visibility or participation by Minority Ethnic communities in the city's culture</li> <li>• Social narrative videos have been produced for seven key venues in the city to provide key information for audiences with a disability</li> <li>• Partnership with University of Atypical to deliver training for twenty disability champions</li> <li>• Supported organisations to enhance their Equality, Access and Inclusion offer to d/Deaf, disabled and neurodiverse audience members</li> </ul> <p>In practice and as part of council's wider programme delivery, this has involved engagement with groups and organisations in programming, where appropriate e.g. Lord Mayor's Day programme included Beyond Skin, Age Friendly Belfast, Arts Ekta. Plus support from Good Relations Unit in sharing information to groups. Engagement with Ukrainian community re Eurovision.</p>
1.9	Development, publication and full public consultation of draft Social Value Policy	2021-22	Publication of finalised policy and guidance	Cross - departmental	Social Value Procurement Policy 'SVPP' went live in June 22 with April 23 changes being implemented during FY 23/24.
					We have continued to support CPS in establishing the new approach to Social Value which includes providing direct support to BCC contractors in achieving their E&S and supply-chain related Social Value requirements. This has included, for example, facilitating 'Meet the Buyer' events through to offering inclusive recruitment pathways through employment Academies. Officers also provide support of any contractor working in Belfast to meet their own Social Value requirements.

## 2. Working and learning

BCC will work to ensure people are appropriately skilled for the jobs created in the city.

Education is the foundation for a better life, not only in facilitating future employment and providing access to a fulfilling adult life, but also as a major contributor to a person's wellbeing and to shaping lifelong health. Working with our partners, we will bring forward a work programme which supports the inclusive growth ambitions of the Council with a focus on addressing barriers to progression

Ref No	Actions	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Departmental Responsibility	Update/ Progress 2022-23
2.1	Focus on young people by delivering the Youth Support Programme targeting young people between 14- 24 years at risk or disengaged from formal education or training/employment.	2021-24	Percentage participating in positive outcomes in education, training and employment	Place & Economy	170 young people were supported who either already have or are at risk of dropping out of the education system, employment or training through our Youth Support Programme which exceeds the annual target of 160. While the programme continues to June 2022, it is expected that 55% will have progressed into positive outcomes such as employment and further education/training.



### 3. Living here

Our city and neighbourhoods are vibrant, resilient, and safe places where people choose to live, work, and spend time being healthier and more active.

In our recent residents' survey, 86% of respondents were satisfied with Belfast as a place to live. We want everyone to be satisfied. We want to deliver a high quality of life for everyone. In doing so, we must deliver and plan effective public spaces and conserve our natural environment so it can be accessed and enjoyed.

Ref No	Actions	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Departmental Responsibility	Update/ Progress 2022-23
3.1	Deliver the Age-friendly Belfast Plan 2018-2021 assess achievements, identify challenges and develop a new Age-friendly Belfast plan 2022-2025	2021	Measure outcomes framework, consult with older people and stakeholder, review baseline information; 2022 develop new plan and begin to deliver	City & Neighbourhood Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Age Friendly Belfast Plan 2022-2026 was completed and agreed by Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership and the All-Party Reference Group on Older People and put out for public consultation in October 2022.</li> <li>Consultation ended December 2022, the plan was amended and agreed and new timeline of 2023-2027 to align with Belfast Agenda</li> <li>Age Friendly Belfast Plan 2023 -2027 will be launched in May 2023</li> <li>The key strategic themes for the plan are: Infrastructure, helping people to get out and about; Social inclusion, promoting social connections health and wellbeing, promoting opportunities to be healthy, active and included and; financial security, supporting people to manage the increasing costs of living.</li> </ul>
3.2	Finalise and implement the Belfast Open Spaces Strategy	2021	To be determined as part of the action plan development.	City & Neighbourhood Services	There has been no progress to develop a 5-year action plan for the delivery of the BOSS due to a continued lack of human resource. Given the operational nature of tasks and activities across the department, and new and emerging issues towards the end of the year, we had limited resources to deliver on this strategy. It remains in our business planning for next year and will receive priority as soon as appropriate resources are in place.
3.3	Develop a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy	2021	To be determined as part of the action plan development.	City & Neighbourhood Services	The initial consultation process of the new Belfast Sports Development and Physical Activity Strategy with all identified stakeholders took place and was completed in January 2023. The Draft strategy is now being completed and will be presented to the projects board members by the end of August 2023. The draft will then be completed and public consultation will commence in September/October 2023. The estimated completion for the Sports Strategy is now April 2024.
3.4	Implement the programme of development of	2021	To be determined following consultation with disability groups.	City & Neighbourhood Services	PIP is an annual programme that has been running now for 12 years, each year we endeavour to make selected playgrounds more accessible and inclusive by using equipment from our corporate supply contract, as

	playgrounds across the city to further improve accessibility (following consultation with disability groups in early 2021).				<p>noted before over 60% of the equipment available is deemed as inclusive. We also undertake civil engineering works to ensure entrances, surfacing and circulation spaces are also accessible, this goes beyond replacement of play equipment.</p> <p>We are now seeking committee approval for PIP 2023-2024, site selection is again based on a suite of annual quality inspections, undertaken by an external consultant. As part of next year's programme further discussions and site visits are planned with organisations who advocate the need to provide more accessible play facilities.</p> <p>Under PIP 2022-23 – completed refurbishment works at Westlands playground (Upper Waterworks Park) – Alongside traditional equipment, the new playground at Westlands (Waterworks Park Upper) also includes an accessible wheelchair swing, accessible/inclusive roundabout, accessible picnic table and acoustic equipment for sensory play. The existing path network, used to access the play facility was also re-engineered to improve accessibility.</p> <p>Commenced construction works at Sally Gardens playground (handover mid-May 2023) – At Sally Gardens playground many of the existing items of play equipment were retained and refurbished, however, with limited space available, we installed a new special-needs cradle swing seat and a new accessible roundabout.</p> <p>Completed design work for Areema playground (construction work started mid - May 2023). Areema playground refurbishment works are currently underway, we plan to install a new accessible roundabout, new inclusive play panels and two sensory items for acoustic play, new spring rockers have also been specified with additional side and back supports.</p>
3.5	Achieve Onus Safe City status and retain platinum-level status	2021	Re-accreditation of Onus Workplace Charter- Platinum level / Safe City Status Achieved	COS-HR	<p>The Council was awarded Onus Safe City Charter status on 2nd February 2021. Agenda item - Safe City Charter Status (<a href="http://belfastcity.gov.uk">belfastcity.gov.uk</a>) and retained Platinum Status- Onus Charter in November 2022.</p> <p>Ongoing financial support for the Raise Your Voice Project to help address misogyny, sexual harassment, and violence.</p> <p>Allocated funding for work with our City Partners to provide training to raise awareness in the city of domestic violence.</p>
				<u>Place &amp; Economy:</u>	<p>Additionally, as part of council's wider role working with partner organisations to create a safe and healthy city, P&amp;E Dept have been working to shape the corporate position in response to our strategic partner(s)' budget setting [DfC/Dfl] e.g. we have opposed Dfl proposed</p>

					cuts to vital services such as switching off street lights, and winter services such as gritting.  There are several tactical regeneration schemes which are directed towards improving safety in the city including the Entries programme, BCC Green & Blue Infrastructure Plan 2020, and A Bolder Vision (under the objective to improve community connectivity).
3.6	Review and implement the council's Toilet Provision Strategy to improve the accessibility of toilets and maintain and promote the Changing Places toilet facility	2021-24	Report on the review of existing process and the number of stakeholder organisations engaged for 19/20. Increase in choice of available Changing Places facilities across the city over the next 24 months.	City & Neighbourhood Services	This has not commenced as yet.  An approach to toilet provision across the City scape, given new and emerging facilities has been the subject of internal discussions as to a holistic approach. There are now 16 x Changing Places Toilets within the Belfast City Area.
3.7	Development of the new crematorium and our intention to acquire additional burial land, particularly for the north and west of the city.	These are medium to long term projects and time scales will be determined as the projects are developed	To be determined as the projects develop.	City & Neighbourhood Services	The planning application for the new crematorium has been approved by Lisburn City & Castlereagh Borough Council Planning Committee in April 2023. Work is ongoing on acquiring additional burial land including liaison with neighbouring Councils, Mid & East Antrim, Antrim & Newtownabbey and Lisburn City & Castlereagh Borough Council.
3.8	Develop a co-design approach to engage communities in Social & Community Recovery planning.	To be determined as the approach is developed	To be determined as the approach is developed	City & Neighbourhood Services	Engagement and development of co-design processes undertaken with strategic and thematic partners in support of implementing the Social Supermarket Fund (SSF) 2022-23. £228,342.42 then allocated across the City to partners to offer a sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to help address the root causes of poverty rather than simply provide food. This is achieved through the provision of a referral network for wraparound support.  Delivery of a £1m Fuel Hardship Fund based on engagement with 9 Area based Strategic Partners.

3.9	Cultural mapping and understanding barriers (research and engagement) to support the delivery of capacity building programme (with tailored strands inc S75)	2021-24	Publish research document	Place & Economy	The Cultural mapping report was presented to members in November 2022. Stage two of this project will be commissioned in August 23 to focus on studying the soft infrastructure (cultural activity) that takes place across the city.
3.10	Create an Audience Panel that contains a range of voices including those underrepresented in cultural engagement (proactively recruit those whose voices are not heard as often)	2021-24	4 focus group meetings held with Audience Panel per annum	Place & Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership with Thrive to maintain the audience / civic panel. Thrive held 4 focus groups meetings in 2022-23.</li> <li>• Partnership with University of Atypical to deliver training for twenty disability champions</li> <li>• Supported Organisations to enhance their Equality, Access and Inclusion offer to d/Deaf, disabled and neurodiverse audience members</li> </ul>
3.11	To develop and deliver the next phases of the City Centre Connectivity Study (CCCS) A Bolder Vision for Belfast ie to create a green, walkable, cyclable network of connected streets and places will improve the health and wellbeing for all, revitalise the city's	2021-24	To be determined as part of the development of the next phases of the Study, which will include public consultation and Equality Screening exercise.	Place & Economy	Engagement with departments on the A Bolder Vision (ABV) is ongoing in the absence of Minister through the oversight and steering groups involving the CX, and Perm Secs from DfC and DfI. The impact of the emerging Climate Action Plan led by DfI is unclear resulting in a number of schemes placed on hold until the impact of the Climate Action Plan and BMTP is understood. It is yet to be understood how these two aspects will impact upon A Bolder Vision. An update was provided to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2022 to note the progress to date on the A Bolder Vision Strategy, including the emerging interventions under the Four Key Moves and on the Ministerial and Chief Executive discussions regarding the Donegall Place and Royal Ave element of the Civic Spine Key Move. ABV remains in abeyance pending completion of key studies including the BMTP and climate action plan. Once BCC projects have been identified and agreed in respect of a ABV Action Plan, they will then be taken through the corporately agreed development processes. A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed between the Council, Department for Infrastructure and Department for Communities to

	economy and restore a sense of collective pride in the centre of Belfast among the communities within and around it.				bring forward an integrated approach to capital scheme delivery and prioritisation/attraction of funding in line with the Bolder Vision. However, DfI has not returned a signed copy of the MoU and has advised they are no longer content to sign the MoU.
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#### 4. Cross-cutting

Our cross-cutting priorities will have a multitude of social, economic, and environmental benefits for the city.

These priorities include once in a lifetime opportunities to fundamentally change the city, culturally, physically and economically and help achieve the big ambitions of the Belfast Agenda.

Ref No	Actions	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Departmental Responsibility	Update/ Progress 2022-23
4.1	Design, implement and pilot an Inclusive Growth Decisions Making Framework	2021-24	The BCC inclusive growth decision-making framework is agreed and rolled out.	City & Organisational Strategy	Following engagement with staff from October 2022 -February 2023, the refreshed and simplified Inclusive Growth Decision-Making Framework has been drafted. This is to be piloted on two-three projects/programmes of work and further enhanced with the inclusion of relevant, practical case studies to support the process of embedding inclusive growth into decision-making processes. This is due to complete by October 2023, in line with the refreshed Belfast Agenda.
4.2	Co-design an Inclusive Growth City Charter in collaboration with our city partners which encourages/ offers recognition for those organisations who adopt business practices as employers, procurers or in the delivery of services which have been proven to create more inclusive economic growth	2021-24	A draft charter is finalised and publicly consulted on by April 2021. / A final charter programme is launched, and a range of businesses sign up by April 2022. / The charter actions/initiatives acknowledge the additional barriers many groups of citizens face in employment and are designed to mitigate against these barriers. / A number of city partners/employers adopt more inclusive growth business practices. / There is an increase of awareness around the benefits of inclusive growth business practices amongst employers	City & Organisational Strategy	While there were delays in the recruitment to secure the staff resources, the team of 3 staff to take forward the draft charter, rebranded as the Belfast Business Promise, was fully in place by March 2023. 5 organisations have agreed to partner the Council to support the delivery and advise on specific pledge areas. To ensure effective delivery, the Social Policy Working Group agreed that the draft charter for a pilot phase in April 2023, with up to 20 organisations signing up. This will allow the further development and refinement of the charter prior to full roll-out in autumn 2023.

			across Belfast, with sharing of best practice. / Economic growth opportunities across the city are more accessible to all residents.		
4.3	Design and deliver the Shared Spaces programme	2022-23	Delivery of physical programme under the PIV Shared Spaces and Services Theme	City & Neighbourhood Services	<p><b>4 volunteer training projects</b> for Cycle and Walking Leads, Local Ambassadors and Nature Guides were delivered by Sustrans, Volunteer Now and The Conservation Volunteers. Training includes safe-guarding, first aid, mediation</p> <p>43 volunteers fully completed the training and have been actively supporting and delivering activity along Forth Meadow Community Greenway, such as Luminare and Swamp Festival events, as well as bird box making</p> <p>It should be noted that recruitment and retention of volunteers was negatively impacted by Covid 19. As funding is ending sustainability and legacy of volunteers is now progressing.</p> <p><b>The Narratives/Interpretative Panels</b> engaged 257 local people and gathered 52 local stories, memories and history, which are currently being compiled in a publication.</p> <p>Narratives have been agreed for inclusion on 17 information panels along the Greenway.</p> <p>Significant community engagement to establish a <b>suitable governance model</b> has taken place. An interim governance model comprising of an Advisory Group has been established and is being support by CNS.</p> <p>Longer-term a dedicated co-ordinator is required.</p> <p>The youth engagement &amp; civic education project engaged 396 young people aged between 11-24 years, with 360 completing the programme. The Young people engaged in a 12-week programme of facilitated sessions and / or group work activities, on Good Relations, Cultural Diversity, Anti-Racism / Anti-sectarianism, Mental Health &amp; Well Being and Personal &amp; Social Development.</p>

4.4	Build relationships across communities to increase confidence using and developing shared spaces and services	2021-24	% increase in the no of participants who feel safe attending event, activities, and facilities in areas associated with a different background.	City & Neighbourhood Services	<p>The SSS Volunteers continue to lead activity along the greenway. Survey analysis of volunteers highlight positive changes.</p> <p>To show how attitudes to cross-community activities have changed following completion of the project, the questions “is the neighbourhood where you live a place where parks and open spaces are safe and welcoming to people from all communities?”. Responses of ‘totally/mostly agree’ increased from 75% to just over 95%, showing a nearly 20% increase in positive answers.</p> <p>Those who answered ‘totally / mostly disagree’ decreased from 3.6% to 0% following the project, showing a 100% positive change.</p> <p>In addition, the survey question ‘do you feel confident using spaces in other communities for everyday activities?’ Responses to ‘yes’, ‘mostly yes’ or ‘neutral’ at the start of the project was 96%, and at the end of the project, this had increased to 100% showing positive changes in attitudes.</p> <p>Within the Youth Civic Education project, the Key Findings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Most participants highlighted that they would like to become friends with people from a different religion to themselves.</li> <li>2. Approx 70% of response indicated that their neighbourhood where you live a place where parks and open spaces are safe and welcoming to people from all communities once the project had finished.</li> </ol> <p>In terms of usage of the greenway, an animation survey of 94 attendees showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 71% of attendees were from residents along the greenway</li> <li>• 95% of attendees said they would attend an event in the future along the greenway</li> <li>• 56% of residents identified as Catholic, 32% as Protestant and 12% from another community background, evidencing a strong cross community mix of attendees at the events</li> <li>• While 93% of visitors felt the events promoted this area of the city as safe, welcoming and inclusive.</li> </ul>
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4.5	Help address issues of demarcation and division including flags, murals and other symbols	2021-24	Delivery of actions within BCC Good Relations Plan working towards a Shared City vision.	City & Neighbourhood Services	The Council continues to support communities in the positive expression of cultural heritage. Where request the Council will engage with groups to support practical interventions on issues of demarcation such as flags, murals and other symbols through advice and support. In addition, the Council provides responses to complaints regarding flags on public property on a regular basis, albeit the responsibility for these generally falls within the remit of the landowner.
4.6	Design and deliver the Interfaces programme	2021-24	% increase in the no of participants who feel safe attending event, activities, and facilities in areas associated with a different background. / Contributions towards physical works and programming that encourage attitudinal change and an even greater sense of belonging and social value.	Cross-departmental	<p><u>CNS</u>: The two key aims of the interface project are to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support relationship building between communities living at interface areas across Belfast, and</li> <li>• Deliver innovative localised cross-interface projects.</li> </ul> <p>This has been achieved through:-</p> <p><b><i>Cross interface Dialogue and Training Programmes:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified projects to address inter community tensions in North Belfast.</li> <li>• Cross community training programme for Good Relations Ambassadors in the New Lodge and Tigers Bay area</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Support for cross-interface shared space events:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interface workshop to identify intercommunal projects</li> <li>• Christmas event at Ardoyne Roundabout.</li> <li>• Christmas shared event in Duncairn Gardens (up to 200 x participants):</li> <li>• Shared space Christmas market at Lanark Way.</li> <li>• North Belfast Lantern Parade – shared Hallowe’en arts event walking through interfaces areas in North Belfast.</li> <li>• Christmas Craft market at the Interface (Black Mountain SS)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Shared Space GR programmes</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater Whitewell (to complement Council assuming ownership of White City Community Centre in 2020/21): Shared Space programme activities.</li> <li>• Black Mountain Shared Space Project (complement PIV capital development).</li> </ul> <p><u>P&amp;E</u>: Through P&amp;E Dept service delivery, support is provided to programming that encourages attitudinal change; this includes the work of Beat Carnival via St Patrick’s Day Parade workshops. In a similar manner the Maritime Festival and support of Maritime Belfast Trust has increased engagement with the communities along the Lagan to instil a sense of belonging and ownership.</p>

4.7	Encourage a re-imagining of the cultural significance of upcoming commemorations under the Decade of Centenaries	2022-23	Development of a Decade of Centenaries Programme based on the DOC principles on Shared perspectives. / % increase in the number of participants who feel comfortable socialising in a shared space they would not normally visit	City & Neighbourhood Services	Complete
4.8	Encourage cultural expression to be celebrated and undertaken within a culture of lawfulness	2021-24	% increase in the number of participants who think the culture and traditions of Catholics, Protestants and minority ethnic people add to the richness of and diversity of Northern Ireland society.	City & Neighbourhood Services	<p>Two significant projects were delivered as part of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan over 2022/23 within the two main communities to support positive cultural expression. For the Council's St. Patrick's Day events, investment was provided to ensure that these were delivered with Good Relations Outcomes at the core.</p> <p>The St. Patrick's Eve concert on March 16<sup>th</sup> and the Carnival Parade on March 17<sup>th</sup> provided the opportunity for an intercultural approach to the St Patrick's Day celebrations in Belfast City centre.</p> <p>Advance participatory community workshops encouraged a cross community collaboration and participation, inspiring and enabling groups to engage who may not have previously been inclined to engage in St Patricks Day events with 20 diverse groups.</p> <p>The concert provided a medium for entertainment from different cultures and backgrounds to enjoy an evening in a family friendly environment.</p> <p>As part of the efforts to ensure that the event is shared and welcoming, thousands of 'shamrock' flags were issued to attendees who lined the carnival parade route.</p> <p>Feedback has been very positive with more people engaging with the parade than in previous years.</p> <p>Some of the media coverage listed here gives a flavour of how the event was received.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Musical Theme as Thousands Attend St Patrick's Day Parade in Belfast - Q Radio</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>St Patrick's Day celebrations bring hundreds onto the streets of Belfast - Belfast Live</u></a></p>

					<p><u><a href="#">St Patrick's Day Belfast: Thousands gather for celebrations in city amid a carnival atmosphere   UTV   ITV News</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">St Patrick's Day: A sea of green as thousands take part in parades   News - Cool FM (planetradio.co.uk)</a></u></p> <p>Within the Unionist Community, a project was delivered which contributed to a range of outcomes for the wider community and for the organisations involved in it, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased community engagement in and understanding of one's own culture</li> <li>• Developing pride in one's cultural identity</li> <li>• Feeling valued, seen and heard by Belfast City Council</li> <li>• Including bands in wider cultural programming (e.g. City of Music, cruise ship itineraries)</li> <li>• Broaden the audience for Unionist culture (e.g. women, next generation, ethnic minority communities, Nationalists, across social classes).</li> <li>• To create an environment whereby people from other cultural identities have positive experiences of Unionist culture</li> <li>• To support bands and voluntary groups to be better equipped to fundraise</li> <li>• To develop stronger relationships and networks across the Unionist community sector</li> <li>• To attract more members and supporters</li> <li>• To gain a clear idea of how to get positively involved in 2024 – Belfast's Year of Culture, Creativity and Imagination</li> <li>• To engage with funders and Belfast 2024 to improve access for Unionist groups</li> <li>• To support people running community group's communications to have better insight to managing their own and members' online safety and wellbeing.</li> </ul> <p>Several events took place supporting the broad outcome of positive cultural expression.</p>
4.9	Development, publication and full public consultation of draft Local Policies Plan (LPP) [to include an Equality Impact Assessment, as well as a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic	2021-23	Publication of finalised policies following independent examination	Place & Economy	<p>The LDP Plan Strategy was adopted on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 and is now in effect. All documentation is available on the LDP webpages [<a href="https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/ldp">https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/ldp</a>]. Work will now continue on the Local Policies Plan, including public consultation likely during 2023/24. EQIA/RNIA are ongoing throughout.</p>

	Environmental Appraisal and a Rural Needs Impact Assessment]				
4.10	Development, publication and full public consultation on Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) topic areas	2021-23	Publication of finalised range of SPG policies	Place & Economy	17 No. Supplementary Planning Guidelines have been agreed and published to support a number of key policies in the LDP Plan Strategy, which took effect on 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2023. All documentation is available on the LDP webpages [ <a href="https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/ldp">https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/ldp</a> ].
4.11	Build the capacity of disengaged and marginalised citizens and community leaders and changemakers to engage	2021-23	No. of engagement projects undertaken in collaboration with pre-engagement through the VCSE panel	City & Organisational Strategy	<p>Throughout 2022-23, we continued to work with the VCSE panel to review and refresh the Belfast Agenda. This included detailed action planning. Representatives from the VCSE Panel were represented on each of the priority working groups.</p> <p>The Phase 2 engagement was officially launched in October 2022. As part of this phase of the engagement we held 10 workshops. The workshops sought to engage by geographical area, thematic issues including a business/ developers workshop and to reach seldom heard voices via an equality, diversity and inclusion workshop.</p> <p>Online discussion forum were also available for each priority area on the Your Say Platform, whilst participants could also submit written comments via comment boxes at the workshops.</p> <p>Summary material was translated into Irish and 6 minority languages to promote participation and inclusion.</p> <p>176 participants from 110 organisations participated on the workshops and online.</p> <p>In addition, we held an Elected Members workshops and several Community Planning Delivery Boards &amp; VCSE Panel workshop sessions. Two representatives from the VCSE Panel were invited to sit on the 'Move More Eat Well' PB design team. A PB pilot being lead by the Active Belfast Partnership.</p>
4.12	Produce a consultation and engagement toolkit for officers and provide ongoing advice and capacity building	2021-24	% of residents who agree that council consults with and listens to the views of local residents (survey in 2021 and 2023)	City & Organisational Strategy	<p>The unit continued to advise and provide support to services on good practice consultation and engagement and continues to train officers on the Your Say Belfast (YSB) platform.</p> <p>We have assisted the Active Belfast Partnership to pilot a participatory budgeting (PB) scheme within the BCC area. We arranged 2 PB briefing sessions in August and September 2022 and set up a dedicated PB hub on the YSB platform. An introductory video explaining PB was created to</p>

					provide an easy to understand overview of PB. The PB pilot is ongoing, but a learning and evaluation report will be developed in the coming year. Towards the end of 2022-23 we agreed to reconstitute the C&E Working Group to take account of staff changes and learning from the PB pilot and Belfast agenda refresh. Over the coming year the group will seek update and refresh our guidance and internal support practices.
4.13	Work with community planning partners to improve how data is accessed and utilised to ensure the Belfast Agenda process understands and takes action to address inequalities	2021-24	Belfast Agenda Dashboard updated. / Consultation and engagement gives all people equal opportunity to participate	City & Organisational Strategy	As the refresh of the Belfast Agenda is still ongoing, this work has progressed minimally. Initial conversations have been held with the Climate Team and the Inclusive Growth lead to determine synergies and a manageable approach to data and performance management moving forward. Recruitment process for two Data Analysts is currently underway. The appointees will monitor, review and evaluate all data in the Belfast Agenda, work on developing new data where there are gaps and build a dashboard style data platform for the Belfast Agenda.
4.14	Promoting Inclusive Growth (IG) through the Belfast Region City Deal Action 1 (over 10 years) Develop clear and robust arrangements to monitor how well actions to promote IG through the BRCD are delivering. This will help us to report on progress at both a geographical and on a priority group basis to improve understanding of what types of interventions and policy changes work best in which circumstances and for which groups.	2021-23	Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements in place and communicated to partners	Finance & Resources	<p>We are supporting partners as they begin their procurement processes so that contractors build in social value considerations to their tender responses. Training has been provided to all project sponsors in this regard.</p> <p>We will be using the Strategic Investment Board's (SIB) Social Value Portal to monitor the contribution of contractors and incorporating the results into our quarterly performance returns. This information can be segregated in various ways to understand which groups are being targeted.</p> <p>Contractors will also be sign-posted to relevant E&amp;S supports as we come to understand the job opportunities and skills needs they are supporting.</p>
4.15	Promoting Inclusive Growth (IG) through the Belfast Region City Deal Action 2 (over 10 years) Deliver new and better jobs to the BRCD region and support the region's economic recovery	2021-24	Establish an Employability and Skills programme to support the ambitions of the BRCD	Finance & Resources - BRCD	<p>We continue to implement the current programme of work which has been refined as we enter the delivery phase of the Deal.</p> <p>Delivering <i>inclusive</i> economic growth, a key ambition of the city and growth deal approach, will involve ensuring that opportunities can be accessed by as wide a range of people as possible across NI who can benefit from this investment.</p>

	<p>efforts. This will be done in the context of IG and will include programmes and interventions to enable all groups, particularly those furthest from the labour market, to avail of the opportunities emerging through the capital investment.</p>				<p>To be sufficiently well positioned to achieve this we will need to understand the current labour market and the skills landscape that underpins it, particularly in relation to the planned city and growth deal projects.</p> <p>Following engagement with DfE and DfC on the best way forward we are now progressing a series of sectoral skills assessments on a NI wide basis through a recently established Cross Deal Skills Group. These skills assessments have been planned to reflect the various projects emerging through the deal – with one on Advanced Manufacturing sector now nearing completion.</p> <p>In all cases the assessments will consider the jobs and skills opportunities in the context of the current labour market and Identify and make recommendations to drive inclusive growth across the city and growth deals; The resulting recommendations will involve actions for a range of delivery agents.</p>
4.16	<p>Develop, roll out and deliver new physical programme: £8m Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund, through an open call process. The Fund will focus upon a number of key thematic areas and reflect the priorities agreed within the City Recovery Framework: environmental/sustainable projects, neighbourhood tourism and social enterprise.</p>	2021-24	<p>Number of projects completed, number of consultation exercises encompassing Section 75 groups</p>	Physical Programmes	<p>61 projects applied to Stage 1 – Application.</p> <p>21 projects were selected to progress to Stage 2 - Development.</p> <p>Comprehensive feedback was available to applicants. Information on other funding and advice opportunities was provided to all applicants.</p> <p>As part of the Stage 2 process, business case development is underway. This activity involves consideration of social, economic and environmental aspects. The Stage 2 process will continue into 2023/24.</p> <p>The fund is underpinned by three themes via the Belfast Agenda – Social Economy, Neighbourhood Tourism</p> <p>Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) methodology has been applied to the programme.</p>
4.17	<p>Delivery of Physical Programme including £180m Capital Programme for council assets. Also management, development and delivery of externally funded programmes such as the Executive Office's</p>	2021-24	<p>Number of projects completed, number of consultation exercises encompassing Section 75 groups</p>	Physical Programmes	<p>Consultation exercises have been undertaken using the widely accessible YourSay platform regarding the development of a LGBTQ+ Hub, Lagan Gateway Phase 2 Greenway Connection, Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility and Pitt Park. All of these consultations were promoted through PR, Council's website and social media channels. Some of the consultation exercises included in person and online meetings/events. Consultation on Alleygates Phase 5 was also completed as well as Parks Surveys 22-23 for Urban Villages' projects parks, play parks and open spaces across Belfast.</p>

	flagship good relations programme Urban Villages, approx £46m.				<p>A public engagement event for works to Cherryvale Playing Fields was held.</p> <p>City &amp; Neighbourhoods Department in conjunction with Urban Villages continue to undertake Parks User Surveys 2022-23 for capital projects under Urban Villages including Pitt Park, Páirc Nua Chollann and Glenbryn Playground.</p> <p>Furthermore, consideration of accessibility needs is an important aspect of all our projects and this year we have ensured provision through a number of projects, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Midland Boxing and Social Club Re-development – Introduction of disability toilets and exterior ramp to front and rear of property.</li> <li>• Strangford Playing Fields – Pedestrian Paths - Improved and extended existing pedestrian paths within the park to cater for the wider community including local schools for special educational needs who had indicated the need for improved surface of existing paths for people who use wheelchairs.</li> <li>• Marrowbone Millennium Park Redevelopment - Consultation with CNS regarding sensory equipment and inclusive play-park equipment.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, we undertake audits of our own facilities and through our maintenance programme we ensure the installation of new disability toilets or upgrading of existing ones where necessary.</p>
4.18	Deliver Pandemic Recovery Plan	2021-23	Developed understanding of impact of Covid 19 on existing inequalities	Cross - departmental	The Recovery Plan has been subsumed into ordinary business planning.

4.18	Deliver Pandemic Recovery Plan	2021-23	Developed understanding of impact of Covid 19 on existing inequalities	Cross - departmental	<p>As part of the Belfast: Our Recovery framework, the Skills and Employability team continued to deliver Employment Academies and other tailored employment interventions to support those most impacted by COVID-19 and those furthest from the labour market. This has included working with the Learning &amp; Work Institute to deliver a 'New Futures' programme through the Covid-19 Funds for Tech Employment Academies.</p> <p>Through our ongoing programmes of work, initiatives such as the Business Cluster, Vacant to Vibrant and area revitalisation schemes will have aided businesses in their recovery and future vitality and viability. The Covid 19 Recovery Revit Programme evaluation report noted that the fund was intended "To help people feel safe and confident to re-enter retail outlets within the city centre it was important to demonstrate effective management of social distancing requirements, management of queuing and pedestrian flows."</p>
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## 5. Our organisational priorities

As our city becomes more ambitious so must we.

To do this, we can only succeed with the wholehearted support and enthusiastic contribution of our staff. To harness this energy, they need to feel valued and understand how they contribute. As an organisation, if we want to perform these capabilities to the best of our abilities, we must continuously look to improve how we do things. We have therefore agreed priorities that will help us improve our capability. For example, in order to provide the best customer experience possible, we have developed a customer focus programme that will enhance the experience felt by all our customers.

Ref No	Actions	Timescale	Performance Indicator	Departmental Responsibility	Update/ Progress 2022-23
5.1	Ensure that the council communicates effectively with its citizens, using assistive technology and maintaining standards such as Plain English and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines AA standards	2021-24	Website to provide assistive technology and follow new and current Plain English and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines AA Standards.	Cross-departmental	<p><u>CNS:</u> Operating model for the provision of Audio Visual services at the crematorium to be considered by Strategic Cemeteries &amp; Crematorium Working Group with a view to implementing in the existing crematorium before transferring to the new Crematorium.</p> <p>Utilisation of Firetext communications with residents to increase collection rate of bulky waste from 65% to over 90% and further Apps will be introduced 22/23 to report and address missed collections and associated collection issues (missed bins/damaged bins etc.)</p> <p>The bulky waste customer reminders have been ongoing on a new platform 'Elogii', which has maintained high successful collection rates. Another 'Report it' app has also been operationalised allowing bin collection squads to take photographs of the reason they were unable to collect a bin (blocked street, bin damaged or contaminated etc.); these reports are available to the customer hub and have been used to provide customers more detail on the reasons why their bin was missed.</p> <p><u>COS:</u> We comply with the Web Content Accessibility Standards 2.1 Level AA to widen access to our information to all users, including people with disabilities. We implemented the recommendations of the Digital Accessibility Centre's report on manual accessibility.</p> <p>To ensure we maintain best practice in accessibility. The Silktide Index <a href="https://index.silktide.com">https://index.silktide.com</a>, which measures accessibility levels for all public sector sites in the UK, evaluates us at 94% - an 'excellent' score. To achieve a higher score, we would need to make all PDFs machine readable (WCAG A 1.1.1) and ensure captions are provided for all pre-recorded audio and video (WCAG A 1.2.2).</p>

					<p>The website (<a href="https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/">https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/</a>) includes the ReachDeck digital inclusion toolbar. ReachDeck provides speech, reading and translation support tools to help ensure information is easier and more accessible for people.</p> <p>The website is approved by Plain English Campaign (<a href="http://www.plainenglish.co.uk">http://www.plainenglish.co.uk</a>) on an annual basis. Our content is written according to the Plain English Campaign guidelines, so it can be widely and easily understood.</p> <p><u>P&amp;E</u>: For the ABV consultation which took place during the Covid 19 pandemic CRD committed to optimise the use of all available engagement channels and their functionality.</p> <p>For example, through the use of the YourSay online platform, we used every available widget to maximise awareness and participation including a digital animator, webinars, information sessions, e-bulletins, and a virtual consultation room. All social media channels available to us were also employed to push out comms notifications and to invite participation in the public consultation which yielded one of the highest respondent rates.</p> <p>Our Vacant to Vibrant promotional videos had subtitling, so did the Expression of interest for secured cycle parking.</p>
5.2	Develop a new Customer Hub designed around customer needs	2021-24	New professional customer hub designed and implemented. Customer satisfaction with the HUB service.	City & Organisational Strategy	<p>The Customer Hub has now been operational for two years and has dealt with over 500,000 customer contacts.</p> <p>This has included the development of automated web forms as part of the digital first not digital only design principles.</p> <p>The Customer Hub team also operate as a first point of contact for Customers in Face-to-Face visits to the Cecil Ward Building operating customer services as part of the reception desk.</p> <p>Further transition of services will take place in 2023/24.</p>
5.4	Improve engagement with customers across all S75 categories	2021-24	% of issues understood impacting on different groups of people leading to a better-informed decision-making process and improved customer service	Cross-departmental	<p><u>CNS</u>: Migrant Forum continues to operate and has grown in number, with over 35 organisations typically attending meetings and 124 individuals on the mailing list.</p> <p><u>P&amp;E</u>: Culture Unit and Belfast 2024 engagement plan is being delivered with artists and for artists, audiences and participants, who identify to a number of diverse S75 categories and care is taken to ensure equality messaging and a clear welcome for all.</p> <p>The Council has delivered a strong welcoming programme via the city centre venue, 2 Royal Avenue, which welcomes all audiences from all S75 categories and programmes events and projects specifically targeting those communities, e.g. Queer Art Market.</p>

					<p>E&amp;S facilitate an E&amp;S Provider Network which provides local organisations - who work with those further from the labour market – with information on upcoming Employment Academies to enable them to prepare and match their participants (who are underrepresented in the labour market) with the upcoming opportunities. To date, 209 people are members of this network and represent a wide range of Section 75 groups: disability organisations, women’s centres, youth-based projects, migrants’ groups etc.</p> <p><u>Customer Hub</u>: Summary translations of significant strategies and policies are now being translated into the minority languages as a standard practice.</p> <p>The use of easy read summaries for people with learning difficulties is also being embedded within our consultations.</p>
5.5	Provide accessible channels of communication to reflect diverse customers’ needs	2021-24	Greater opportunities for two-way communication using a range of customer feedback tools and measures. An accessible online service Translated documents of interest available on request	Cross-departmental	<p><u>P&amp;E</u>: In the last year, P&amp;E Dept had nine public consultations and engagement exercises to communicate (two-way) with a range of stakeholders. We had almost 3,000 visitors to our Your Say pages and in total of 1,155 online responses covering a range of Section 75 categories. Besides surveys, we used tools for ‘idea sharing’, storytelling, posing questions and interactive maps – all of which ensured meaningful dialogue and online engagement.</p> <p>Culture Unit and Belfast 2024 had a signer present on various topics including our co-creation framework and artist bursaries, alongside officers for engagement via Teams</p> <p>Council has used its city centre venue.2 Royal Avenue in order to showcase and share information on projects and initiatives which reflect diverse customers’ needs including migrants, unemployed, wellbeing / mental health events, etc and ensured that information is provided in an accessible way to all.</p> <p>The Accessible Tourism Programme 22-23 contributed to this via a suite of resources and blended learning. In addition, following the 2023 St Patrick’s Celebrations public feedback sessions were facilitated in 2 Royal Ave. CRD approach’s is to encourage community participation within our consultation and engagement exercises especially the hard to reach / seldom heard groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expression of Interest secured cycle parking</li> <li>• Expression of Interest Grey to Green</li> <li>• 2 Royal Ave public consultation on proposals through the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid – YourSay survey, door to door with businesses</li> </ul> <p>A Bolder Vision consultation included online engagement with persons with a disability and older adults, BSL interpreters made available. Consultation documentation was also made available in screen-reader format.</p>

					<p><u>CNS</u>: The public can continue to access Bereavement Services via information on the Council website, telephone and email. Funeral Directors are able to book crematorium slots online and upload statutory documentation. Burial record searches are available online.</p>
5.7	Develop and deliver Gender, Disability, LGBTQ+ and Minority and Inclusion workforce diversity action plans	2021-24	Activity in plans agreed, resourced and delivered.	City & Organisational Strategy - HR	<p>Gender Action Plan</p> <p>Outstanding actions from 2022-23 have been included in Year 3 (2023/2024) of the three year GAP (2021/22-2023/24).</p> <p>Activity in Belfast City Council's Gender Action Plan is grouped under the following themes:</p> <p>Gender Equality in the Council</p> <p>Held an in-person event in City Hall to celebrate IWD. Ongoing work relating guidance for managers to welcome staff back from periods of extended leave, maternity, parental leave etc.</p> <p>Women's Leadership Programme delivered – 22 participants (5 elected members &amp; 17 officers).</p> <p>Participated in the NI Gender Diversity Charter assessment- retained Silver level accreditation; preparing for assessment in 2023/24 with the goal of attaining Gold level accreditation.</p> <p>Women's Network Group ongoing- recently appointed a new Deputy Chair and Secretary</p> <p>Ongoing work to promote BCC as an employer that values and supports equality and diversity. Targeted women's group to promote opportunities through the OSS General Operative pre- recruitment and training programme. Organised an information session at Women's Tec</p> <p>Onus Domestic Violence Charter – retained Platinum level. Training ongoing</p> <p>Menopause Policy and Guidance developed and implemented.</p> <p>Menopause Support Group established. Meetings held every two months</p> <p>Pilot scheme offering free period products and reusable period products for staff. Plan to extend the pilot in 2023/24. Evaluate the pilot and assess costs for future provision.</p> <p>Gender Equality in the Community</p> <p>Funding provided for external IWD event</p> <p>Information relating to the Women's and LGBTQ+ staff networks is included in the jobs section of the website.</p>

				<p>Participation of staff network, friends and allies in Belfast Pride.</p> <p>A number of staff and their family members participated in a guided Pride Walk and picnic organised by the Proud staff network.</p> <p>A Pride flag was displayed at City Hall to celebrate Pride.</p> <p>Staff event held in City Hall to mark Transgender Day of Remembrance. A Transgender flag was displayed at City Hall to mark the occasion</p> <p>City Hall lit in colours of Trans flag to coincide with Transgender Day of Visibility on 31 March.</p> <p>Staff intranet and social media used to promote LGBT Awareness week and Transgender Awareness Week</p> <p>Advertised two senior positions through Stonewall</p> <p>Six LGBT+ awareness raising sessions delivered including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a Bi- Inclusive workplace</li> <li>• LGBTQ+ Mental Health: Supporting your colleagues</li> <li>• Understanding and Reflecting the Experience of LGBTQ+ People with Disabilities</li> <li>• Bi Awareness</li> <li>• LGBTQI+ Awareness</li> <li>• Transgender Awareness</li> </ul> <p>Promoting Equality in the Economy</p> <p>We deliver Employment Academies across a whole range of sectors including:</p> <p>Practical sectors (construction, transport, fibre optics), professional services (tech, admin etc.) through to care sectors (classroom assistants, social care, childcare etc.) and overall 43% of our participants are female.</p> <p>Within low-paid sectors, which are predominately made up of female workforce – such as classroom assistants, childcare and health/social care – we deliver Upskilling Academies for those working in these sectors. Here we provide vocational qualifications between Level 3-5 to enable people to gain a better job within these sectors (e.g. supervisor and managerial level).</p> <p>Overall, our Upskilling Academies have supported over 200 people in 2022/23 and over 90% are female. Our newest upskilling academy for classroom assistants with also provide a pathway towards degree-level qualifications in education for those completing.</p> <p>Employability &amp; Skills Unit (E&amp;S) co-ordinate a provider network for those working with under-represented groups in the city which has membership of</p>
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					<p>over 209 people working in E&amp;S across every part of the city, all Belfast JBOs and different target groups including women.</p> <p>Fortnightly 'newsletter' and monthly workshops on upcoming academies – and provision of 'the year ahead' with key details on employers, jobs, eligibility, pre-requisites, programme content, duration, additional support offered (childcare, sign-language interpreters, travel, subsistence etc).</p> <p>E&amp;S host events and roadshows across the city to engage under-represented groups for Employment Academies and directly link organisations such as EBM, GEMS, USDT, Shankill Job Assist, Ashton Centre, Womens Tec, Action Mental Health, JBOs, GLOW, Harmoni Homeless Hostel, Shankill Shared Women Centre, Walkways, City Life Projects, Revolution Youth, African Caribbean Society etc.</p> <p>In addition to providing access to Employment Academies targeting under-represented groups, we also provide supports to remove barriers to participation such as travel, subsistence, childcare fees etc.</p> <p>Through our membership of RSA Cities of Learning, we have also designed digital badges for all those completing Employment Academies that recognise the skills being developed through a digital award. We also offer this to 20 organisations in the city, including those supporting women (such as Women's Tec who have created a suite of digital badges for their participants.</p> <p>Through our dedicated female enterprise support 15 women were provided with 1-1 mentoring, peer support, workshops and access to networking opportunities. As a result of the support 10 businesses have started up, 1 participant successfully secured funding through Techstart of £35,000.</p> <p>In addition to this Belfast City Council also provided funding to enable Women in Business to deliver the International Voices of Leadership Conference which was about inspiring ambition, leadership, best practice, and about skills and personal development. Around 400 local delegates attended this half day Conference. Speakers include Hillary Clinton, Cherie Blair, Mary McAleese, Sarah Friars, Caroline Feeney, Sister IN.</p> <p>Delivered dedicated support for individuals who are currently economically inactive to overcome barriers to starting a business through our enterprise pathways initiative. While this service was not gender specific it had a strong focus on supporting participants including women with barriers to Enterprise Participants were supported to overcome structural barriers including</p>
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					<p>childcare, travel and finance as well as personal barriers including for example challenges presented by mental health, emotional well-being and addiction issues.</p> <p>Of the 20 participants that were supported to complete a business plan 18 were female and additional of the 18 participants who have started trading 16 were Female.</p> <p>Through our business start up support 498 people completed a business plan, of these 238 were female, 2 identified as other and 1 preferred not to disclose.</p> <p>In addition to this activity across the year we delivered a range of enterprise outreach events working with key stakeholders who directly engage with females including women in business and training organisations. One of the activities we delivered was the Belfast Business Idea award which offered successful finalists access to a package of funding support and advice and guidance to further develop their business, of the 5 finalists, 3 of them were female.</p> <p>Promoting Equality in the City AMS (Asset Management System) project delivery is underway.</p> <p>When the AMS is fully rolled out it is intended that an Asset Management Board will be created. It will oversee the management on council assets going forward including needs of all stakeholders with the opportunity to identify issues/needs.</p> <p>Ongoing:- The Council is supporting a number of projects which look at opportunities of how the needs of women can be better met across the city including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction progressing on the new Shankill Shared Women’s Centre.</li> <li>• Progress on the development of two statues at City Hall celebrating the important contribution of Winfred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken to the city. This will help to achieve a greater level of balance in terms of persons who are depicted or represented within the grounds.</li> <li>• Delivery of the Social Investment Fund (SIF) – Continued completion of projects including Walkway Community Centre which help to improve the needs of women in their local areas.</li> <li>• Delivery of the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF) – Continued development and completion of a variety of projects which have facilities and programmes designed to improve the needs of women in their local areas.</li> <li>• Delivery of the Local Investment Fund (LIF) – Continued development and completion of a variety of projects. Many of these local community projects benefit women through facilities and programmes.</li> <li>• Continue delivery of the partnership Urban Villages capital investment programme. Many of the projects benefit women through improved health</li> </ul>
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					<p>&amp; wellbeing, employment, training, creche and general community facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued delivery of the Leisure Transformation Programme (LTP) which includes facilities open and accessible to all – Work on Templemore Baths has been progressing and a business case is being developed for Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility. LTP Phase 4 options being considered. Delivery of the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF) – Completion of Stage 1 and commencement of Stage 2 which includes development of business cases for 21 projects. There will be opportunities to ensure needs of women are considered as Stage 2 of NRF progresses and particularly in relation to the projects selected for Stage 3.</li> </ul> <p>Creation of safer green spaces such as Forth Meadow Community Greenway with work progressing at various sections.</p> <p>Retained Platinum Status- Onus Charter</p> <p>Ongoing financial support for the Raise Your Voice Project to help address misogyny, sexual harassment and violence</p> <p>Provided £3000 external funding for training to raise awareness around sexual harassment.</p> <p>Launched a pilot offering free period products for the public in council building and facilities. Plan to extend the pilot in 2023/24. Evaluate pilot and assess costs for future provision.</p> <p>Disability Action Plan</p> <p>(progress below relates to actions not already outlined elsewhere in this update relating to the Disability Action Plan)</p> <p>206 reasonable adjustments have been provided during 2022-2023. Of these 94 were DDA related- 18 were permanent adjustments/ arrangements and 188 were temporary. Examples of adjustments included phased return to work; time out for medical appointments; reduced hours; manual handling restrictions; extended trigger points; removal from phone rota; lighter duties; manual handling restrictions; flexible retirement; change of working hours; no night shift working</p> <p>Ten reasonable adjustment requests at interview stage were requested. No requests were declined.</p> <p>Race Equality Action Plan</p> <p>The Director of City &amp; Organisational Strategy was appointed as an Executive Sponsor in 2022 to make equality, diversity and inclusion the responsibility of all leaders and managers and to oversee the development of the Race Equality Action Plan which is now in its final stages of development. A number of</p>
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					<p>actions will be agreed that we can take as an employer to create a more diverse workforce, and as a city leader, to influence and bring about change.</p> <p>As part of the REAP, Belfast City Council became a signatory to the Business in the Community “Race at Work Charter” in 2022 to learn from best practice and gain support in developing our approach, agreeing actions and setting achievable goals and targets.</p> <p>LGBT+ Action Plan</p> <p>This workforce action plan has been developed to ensure that our organisational culture and working environment allows staff to feel comfortable to be their whole selves at work and that policies and practices empower talent development at all levels and the removal of any form of discrimination. It also aims to increase the understanding of the wider workforce of issues facing the LGBT+ communities.</p> <p>Outstanding actions from 2022-23 have been included in Year 3 (2023/2024) of the three year LGBT+ Action Plan (2021/22-2023/24).</p> <p>Activity in Belfast City Council’s LGBT+ Action Plan is grouped under the following themes:-</p> <p>LGBT+ training and development</p> <p>Stonewall and the Rainbow Project delivered a number of awareness raising sessions to staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a Bi-Inclusive workplace- 1 session</li> <li>• LGBTQ+ Mental Health: Supporting your colleagues – 1 session</li> <li>• Understanding and Reflecting the experiences of LGBTQ+ People with Disabilities- 1 session</li> <li>• Bi- Awareness- 1 session</li> <li>• LGBTQI+ Awareness- 2 sessions</li> <li>• Transgender Awareness- 1 session</li> <li>• Developed peer mentoring and reverse mentoring – completed between Chair of Proud network and Senior LGBT+ Champion. Plan to extend this in 2023/2024</li> <li>• Revised E&amp;D training to ensure awareness of the impact of potential sanction of inappropriate or discriminatory behaviours on service users.</li> </ul> <p>Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised Proud network’s Terms of Reference by explicitly referencing an openness to all LGBT groups especially the most vulnerable</li> </ul> <p>Visibility and Network Growth</p>
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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to use online and Intranet to promote Proud activities and membership e.g. LGBT awareness Week; Transgender Awareness Week; Belfast Pride activity; LGBT+ training</li> <li>Advertised two senior positions through Stonewall. Vacancies mailed to organisations who have consented to be on our jobs mailing list</li> </ul> <p>Community engagement and visibility A number of staff and their family members participated in a guided Pride Walk and picnic</p> <p>Staff network, friends and allies participated in Belfast Pride</p> <p>A Pride flag was displayed at City Hall to celebrate Pride.</p> <p>A Transgender flag was displayed at City Hall to mark Transgender Day of Remembrance in November and City Hall lit in colours of Trans flag to coincide with Transgender Day of Visibility on 31 March.</p> <p>Hosted a Transgender Day of Remembrance event in City Hall</p> <p>Staff intranet and social media used to promote Transgender Awareness Week and LGBT+ Awareness Week</p> <p>Held a fundraising bake sale</p> <p>Social networking and community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributed to an event facilitated by local LGBT+ service providers and other network across NI</li> </ul> <p>Organisational analysis/ continuous improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership of Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme</li> <li>Completed the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index</li> </ul> <p>Service provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included an article on staff intranet- Make your voice heard for LGBT+ equality, focussing on Allyship</li> <li>Used social media to promote BCC as an inclusive service provider e.g. Pride; TDOR; LGBT+ History Month.</li> </ul>
5.8	Improve participation in employment among those furthest from the labour market through ring-	2021-24	Job opportunities ring fenced to the long term unemployed and targeted pre recruitment and training	City & Organisational Strategy - HR	Worked with employability partners across the city to deliver pre-employment training academies to support ring fenced opportunities for the long term employed, for Business Support Clerk and General Operative posts and made 16 permanent appointments from these exercises.

	fenced entry-level posts (where possible), pre-recruitment training programmes, work experience, guaranteed interview scheme and reasonable adjustments				Supported the DfC Job start Programme with nine placements. Work is ongoing to consider how we can develop and fund apprenticeship roles across the Council.
5.9	Encourage participation of disabled people in the workforce, Sign Language Users Forum and Disability Staff Network (DA)	2021-24	Three disability staff network meetings held each year	City & Organisational Strategy - HR	Employees with a disability have input into action planning. 4 staff network meetings held.
5.10	Encourage participation of LGBT+ people in the workforce and LGBT+ staff network 'Proud'	2021-24	Improved promotion of our commitment to equality and diversity both internally and externally	Cross-departmental:	<p>A number of articles have been included on staff intranet to raise awareness of different LGBT+ events/ initiatives e.g., Pride; Transgender Day of Remembrance; Transgender Day of Visibility; Trans Awareness Week; Bi Awareness Week; LGBT+ awareness raising sessions; participation in Stonewall's LGBTQ+ survey</p> <p>Advertised two senior positions through Stonewall.</p> <p><b>Community engagement</b></p> <p>Information relating to the LGBT+ staff network is included in the jobs section of the website; promoted at induction, diversity and disability awareness training.</p> <p>A number of staff and their family members participated in a guided Pride Walk and picnic</p> <p>A Pride flag was displayed at City Hall to celebrate Pride.</p> <p>Participated in Belfast Pride</p> <p>A Transgender flag was displayed at City Hall to mark Transgender Day of Remembrance in November and City Hall lit in colours of Trans flag to coincide with Transgender Day of Visibility on 31 March.</p> <p>Staff intranet and social media used to promote Transgender Awareness Week.</p>

					Contributed to an event facilitated by local LGBT+ service providers and other Networks across NI.
5.11	Encourage participation of all staff in the workplace	2021-24	Hold event/ workshop for both male/ female staff to jointly explore/ discuss diversity and gender issues and identify any areas/ issues to be addressed.	Cross-departmental –	Gender Reference Group consulted on development of Gender Action Plan.
5.12	Review and amend workforce monitoring form	2021-24	Monitoring form reviewed and revised to capture additional information including: · reasonable adjustments required by applicants as part of the recruitment and selection process; Gender identity; Sexual orientation	City & Organisational Strategy	Completed 2020-21.
5.13	Carry out a voluntary monitoring exercise for all staff	2021-24	Voluntary monitoring exercise conducted and up to date information available	City & Organisational Strategy	Voluntary monitoring survey planned for September 2023
5.14	Work to achieve Diversity Charter Mark Silver Award	2021-24	Silver Diversity Charter Mark Achieved	City & Organisational Strategy	Participated in the NI Gender Diversity Charter assessment- retained Silver level accreditation; preparing for assessment in 2023/24 with the goal of attaining Gold level accreditation
5.15	Develop opportunities for Equality and Diversity Champions both at SMT and Elected Member level	2021-24	Equality and Diversity Champions appointed	Cross-departmental	A new Gender Champion appointed.
5.16	Continue to deliver a suite of equality and	2021-24	No/ of sessions delivered; Training evaluation indicators: Quality of	City & Organisational Strategy - HR	In-person training resumed in September 2022. 6 disability awareness sessions delivered- 3 for managers (32 attendees) and 3 for employees (24 attendees)

	<p>diversity awareness training to all staff including diversity, general disability awareness, targeted disability awareness, bi and trans awareness training (classroom based and on-line)</p>		<p>training; Increased understanding; Increase in skills levels</p>		<p>6 diversity sessions delivered- 3 for managers (13 attendees) and 3 for employees (22 attendees)</p> <p>Stress awareness for managers- 7 sessions delivered (44 managers attended).</p> <p>Positive mental health- 6 sessions delivered (54 employees attended)</p> <p>Sighted Guided Training- 2 sessions delivered (26 employees attended)</p> <p>The Health and Wellbeing hub 'Staywell' included advice and guidance on a range of health, wellbeing and disability issues e.g. information and support to support physical health; focus on healthy eating for heart health</p> <p>The Staywell hub provided advice and guidance on a range of health and wellbeing issues including a month-long men's health focus covering a range of physical and emotional wellbeing issues e.g. mental health; prostate cancer, testicular cancer, erectile dysfunction</p> <p>Men's health webinar (delivered by Aware NI (to celebrate International Men's Day)</p> <p>A number of articles have been included on Interlink e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress Awareness Month</li> <li>• Mental Health Awareness Week- Looking out for each other</li> <li>• Men's Health Week</li> <li>• How to choose and use sunscreen</li> <li>• Menopause awareness</li> <li>• Free period products</li> <li>• Yoga/ mindfulness sessions delivered</li> </ul> <p><b>LGBT training</b></p> <p>Stonewall and the Rainbow Project delivered a number of awareness raising sessions to staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a Bi- Inclusive workplace- 1 session</li> <li>• LGBTQ+ Mental Health: Supporting your colleagues – 1 session</li> <li>• Understanding and Reflecting the experiences of LGBTQ+ People with Disabilities - 1 session</li> <li>• Bi- Awareness - 1 session</li> <li>• LGBTQI+ Awareness - 2 sessions</li> <li>• Transgender Awareness - 1 session</li> </ul>
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5.17	Strategic Leaders and Elected members attend leadership equality training	2021-24	No/ of sessions delivered; Training evaluation indicators: Quality of training; Increased understanding; Increase in skills levels	Cross-departmental	Leadership equality training postponed during the pandemic. Not progressed to date.
5.18	Review participation in council's new engagement framework to identify participation gaps or areas for improvement	2021	Participation rates by gender, age, disability, race and community background. (Registrations on new platform). / Assess seldom heard or other s.75 participation rates as applicable. / Consultation and engagement gives all people equal opportunity to participate	City & Organisational Strategy	<p>Ongoing. Widening participation remains a key improvement objective in our corporate Improvement Plan. We work with services to help them plan inclusive engagements, providing advice and support as needed. Over the past year, effort has focused on widening involvement via the PB pilot and attracting new participants. Ensuring our PB market stall voting events enable participation from younger people and newer communities has been a key consideration. The market stall events will be held in April 2023.</p> <p>As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, we have 2957 people registered on the YSB platform. (Number excludes those with a BCC email). Very few of our engagements require participants to be registered on the YSB platform which removes any potential barriers and GDPR implications.</p> <p>Council recruited a new Youth Council this year. The average age of this youth council is much younger than in previous years. Opportunities for enhancing engagement with young people will be explored in the coming year in collaboration with the Youth Council.</p> <p>We contributed to the development of the council's race equality action plan and have committed to supporting actions aimed at improving staff capabilities and knowledge so that can involve and engage more meaningfully with minority ethnic communities.</p>
5.19	Research best practice and assess council's engagement and participation of young people and develop best practice guidance for council officers	2021	Production of guidance and case studies. / Evidence of improved or innovative approaches to engaging young people. / % of young people who agree that council consults with and listens to the views of local residents (survey in 2021 and 2023)	City & Organisational Strategy	Due to the work on the refresh of the Belfast Agenda, the PB pilot and the capacity building needed within the new youth council, this work has been put on hold at a corporate level.
5.20	Support platforms, networks and forums, such as	2021-24	% attendance at each meeting from cross section of organisations/individuals; % of staff/members who	Cross-departmental	<u>HR</u> : Race Equality Action Plan has been drafted and includes actions emanating from the research commissioned to look at the experiences of people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, living in Belfast

	<p>the Older People's Forum, Disability Advisory Panel and Migrant Workers' Forum, that widen engagement, targeting in particular those most at risk of being "seldom heard"</p>		<p>understand purpose of these networks and forums and find it useful; Effective feedback mechanism established, and used by members</p>		<p>Council has commissioned a number of projects to support asylum seekers in Belfast through the Home Office Dispersal funding, including 3 key projects delivered by the Red Cross, Conway Education, and Barnardos.</p> <p>Council commissioned a specific project in partnership with the BHSCT to deliver an advice line to Ukrainian Nationals living in Belfast, the project is due to complete in June 2023</p> <p>Migrant Forum continues to operate and has grown in number, with over 35 organisations typically attending meetings and 124 individuals on the mailing list.</p> <p>Council has continued to run diversity initiatives and provide opportunities for people to explore diversity issues.</p> <p>Research completed and launched in December 2022: Council commissioned the Red Cross to develop orientation and information sessions for Asylum Seekers in hotel accommodation, this project completed in March 2023</p> <p>Council commissioned the Law Centre to develop an update of the Refugee Transition Guide, which is now available in 5 different languages.</p> <p>The Council has continued to fund projects, through our good relations fund that support the integration and inclusion of new communities.</p> <p>Events run in 22/23:- Holocaust Memorial Day; Black History Month; Refugee Week;</p> <p>Addressing Anti-Muslim Sentiment Quotation put out for tender on 2 occasions but no response.</p>
5.21	<p>Use our engagement platform to encourage and build capacity within communities to engage with council using dialogue and qualitative mechanisms</p>	2021-23	<p>No. of standing panels. / No. of project specific panels and forums. / No. and type of panels involving targeted Section 75 or seldom heard groups (per year)</p>	Cross-departmental	<p><u>COS</u>: The Greater Belfast Seniors Forum who represent 6 local older peoples forums across the city met 11 times via zoom, once with elected members from the All Party Reference Group and once with the Lord Mayor as well as taking part in a number of consultations. The big achievement this year was The Age Friendly Belfast Plan 2023-2027 being developed and agreed, the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum have an action plan that runs alongside this. Representatives from the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum sit of the Health Ageing Strategic Partnership and other partnerships.</p> <p><u>P&amp;E</u>: Across P&amp;E Dept, various units attended Council for a including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Culture Heritage and Arts Unit attended Disability Advisory Panel and D-Deaf and Disabled Advisory Group around our co-creation framework during 2022.</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Lead on Accessible Tourism has liaised with the Older People's Forum and Disability Advisory Panel in the development and delivery of the Accessible Tourism Programme year 22-23.</li> </ul> <p>Employability and Skills attend all Migrant forum meetings and have a standing item on the agenda on Employment Academies and economic Development Update to ensure all Migrant forum members are aware of and can refer their participants to upcoming opportunities</p>
5.22	Deliver Equality Scheme Implementation Plan	2021-24	Annual compliance report to EDNS / No. of complaints	Legal & Civic Services	The annual compliance report is combined with the annual report, which is reported to all Chief Officers and the Council. No complaints were received during this reporting year.
5.23	Deliver Rural Needs Action Plan	2021-24	Annual compliance report to EDNS / No. of complaints	Legal & Civic Services	The annual compliance report is combined with the annual report, which is reported to all Chief Officers and the Council. No complaints were received during this reporting year.
5.24	Effective Leadership in S75 demonstrated through the Equality and Diversity Network	2021-24	At least 3 meetings of both Operational and Strategic levels of the Equality and Diversity Network. / Completed audit of S75 processes.	Legal & Civic Services	Significant organisational change negatively impacted the structure of both the Operational and Strategic levels of the Equality and Diversity Network and the number of meetings held. Actions to address the issues will take place in the 23/34 year and will include a review of our approach to S75 processes.
5.25	Explore development of baseline of equality related information for use by staff in all aspects of the council business	2022-24	Information of relevant equality data communicated to all staff available to all staff. / Access to equality data sets	Cross-departmental	<p>Economic development continues to embed the tracking of section 75 and Inclusive Growth priority groups within a bespoke CRM that has been developed for the department. This will provide more detailed equality monitoring data going forward.</p> <p>The gaps in equality data remain significant. Census 2021 data relevant to Section 75 categories has now been released and is made readily available to staff. Recommendations from the Inclusive Data Taskforce will be considered for their relevance to our work, with appropriate actions developed.</p>
5.26	Deliver Language Strategy 2019-23 and related action plans	2021-23	Analyse feedback and develop an action plans as appropriate	Legal & Civic Services	An updated version of the Language Strategy Action Plan has been developed. This has been benchmarked against other public bodies and relevant legislation. It has had significant input from senior officer across Council departments and has been shown to the Council's Language Stakeholder Fora for feedback and has been approved for public consultation by the Member-Led Language Strategy Working Group and Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.



## Glossary

CNS – City and Neighbourhood Services

P&E – Place and Economy

FR – Finance and Resources

COS - City and Organisational Strategy

IG – Inclusive Growth

SP&R – Strategic Policy and Resources Group

SPG – Supplementary Planning Guidance

EDNO – Equality and Diversity Network (Operational)

EDNS – Equality and Diversity Network (Strategic)

Corp Comms – Corporate Communications

BRCD – Belfast Region and City Deal